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LB 180, 401, 806A

state funding. We can put it into a trust fund, as is suggested in (LB) 180. We can appropriate it to schools this year which, candidly, is my highest priority. I believe we need to do that, but I'm aware that the body is not yet coalesced around that idea. And the fourth thing that we can do is a bill on the agenda a little later on today and that is LB 401 which we can return a portion of the surplus to the citizens in the form of an income tax cut. And again, I don't think we'll reach any final decisions on that. It is...with my vote today, I'm going to be voting to keep options open and that means I will be advancing this bill on to Select File so it can sit with LB 180. I'm somewhat mindful of the fact that we talk about making these decisions at a later date. And when you're at the 71st day of a 90-day session, there are not that many later dates ahead of us, so I would, I guess, caution those of you that are talking about deferring this decision to a later date meaning, hopefully, one of the next 19 legislative days, that there'll be some sort of a decision made. But I'd urge everybody to advance 806A in its current form, even mindful of Senator Wickersham's point that there is an appropriation that will be ahead of the policy choice, not just catching up to it, with the ESU decision, but despite the fact that that's unusual, I...that's not enough to make me think that we ought not to advance the bill in its current form.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. A lot of us are doing this primarily to stake out our positions of where we're going to be when we get to Select File because you will have a choice, I believe, between 806A and LB 180. The speech I gave on 180 was that that was a savings account approach. This is the check-writing approach. To keep my position straight, I prefer the savings account, but I see no advantage today in keeping 806A from advancing. It needs to be up there as part of the consideration. And given the debate, who knows, maybe writing the check is the smartest way at the end, but at least as I stand today with the information I have today, I'd rather go with the savings account, but would hope that you'd vote to advance 806A today so that you can have that choice later on. Thank you.